

## ***Strategic Goal: Expansion of Americans' Right to Know***

Easy access to a wealth of information about the state of their local environment will expand citizen involvement and give people tools to protect their families and their communities as they see fit. Increased information exchange between scientists, public health officials, businesses, citizens, and all levels of government will foster greater knowledge about the environment and what can be done to protect it.

### **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

Providing all Americans with access to sound environmental information and informing and involving the public in our work are essential parts of a comprehensive approach to protecting the environment.

This goal is premised on the concept that the public has a "right-to-know" about the pollutants in their environment, including land, air and water pollution as well as potential health effects of the chemicals used in the food they consume and

everyday products they purchase. This premise is especially important to minority, low-income, and Native American communities that suffer a disproportionate burden of health consequences from poor environmental conditions.

The Agency believes the public has the right to receive adequate knowledge of and be represented in public policy and environmental decision-making processes.

### **MEANS AND STRATEGY**

Access to environmental information enables the public to make informed decisions about their local environment. It also promotes creative and lasting solutions to environmental risks, opportunities for preventing pollution, and sustainable solutions to environmental problems.

The principal accomplishment of this goal will be to empower state, local, and tribal governments and the public by providing information to enable them to make informed decisions regarding environmental issues in their communities. EPA will improve the quality and increase the quantity of general environmental education, outreach and data availability.

EPA will also expand the content of its data

holdings, improve the quality and usability of the data, and ensure the data are widely available through the Internet and other sources.

EPA relies heavily on partnerships with the states, tribes, local governments and regulated parties to protect the environment and human health. EPA's success depends on the ability of these entities to obtain access to the decision-making process as it relates to their local environment.

In addition, EPA relies upon key information management reforms that are essential to support the Agency's new approaches to environmental protection. Examples of key management reforms designed to improve the availability of environmental performance data to the public

include implementation of data standards for major systems and subsequent information collection and data integration. The Agency is promoting the implementation of advanced technology, including the Internet, to disseminate environmental information at the local level.

In the longer term, new technology, unanticipated complexity or magnitude of technological, partnership or environmental problems or newly identified environmental problems and priorities could affect the time frame for achieving the Goal 7 Objectives.

Therefore, the ability of the Agency to achieve its strategic goal of expansion of Americans=Right-to-Know about their environment is influenced by several factors over which the Agency has only partial or no control. As such, success of EPA programs depends on the voluntary cooperation and collaboration of the private sector and the general public and is ultimately determined by increased understanding and actions by the public about their environment. We believe that with increased education, outreach and data availability, the public will be able to participate in the decisions to solve the Nation's environmental problems.

## Research

EPA's research efforts under this goal include the President's Environmental Monitoring for Public Access and Community Tracking (EMPACT) Program, and the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS).

EMPACT is a cross-Agency program established to pilot strategies to provide time relevant, multi-media environmental information to a broad spectrum of the American public in metropolitan areas across the nation.

IRIS is an EPA database of Agency consensus health information on environmental contaminants which is used extensively EPA Program Offices and Regions where consistent, reliable toxicity information is needed for credible risk assessments. Also under this goal, guidance and support will be provided to risk assessors through the provision of risk assessment guidelines, expert consultation and support, and risk assessment training.

## STATUTORY AUTHORITY

- Clean Air Act (CAA) and amendments (42 U.S.C. 7601-7671q)
- Clean Water Act (CWA) and amendments (33 U.S.C. 1251-1387)
- Clinger-Cohen Act
- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) (42 U.S.C. 9601-9675)
- Computer Security Act
- Congressional Review Act (CRA)
- CPRKA of 1986
- Electronic Freedom of Information Act
- Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) (42 U.S.C. 11001-11050)
- Environmental Education Act
- Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Act (ERDDA) of 1981
- Executive Order 12866
- Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (5 U.S.C. App.)
- Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA) Section 408 (21 U.S.C. 346A)
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) (7 U.S.C. 136-136y)
- FMFIA

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY (CONTINUED)**

- Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA)
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552) Results Act (GPRA)
- National Environmental Education
- Government Performance and Results Act
- North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation
- Paperwork Reduction Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Amendment of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520)
- Plain Language Executive Order
- Pollution Prevention Act (PPA) (42 U.S.C. 13101-13109)
- Privacy Act
- Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA)
- Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) (42 U.S.C. 6901-6992k)
- Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and amendments (42 U.S.C. 300f-300j-26)
- SARA
- Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA)
- Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) (15 U.S.C. 2601-2692)
- Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

*Resource Summary*

(Dollars in thousands)

	<b>FY 1999 Pres. Budget</b>	<b>FY 1999 Enacted</b>
<b>Expansion of Americans' Right to Know About their Environment</b>	<b>\$158,923.3</b>	<b>\$133,467.4</b>
Increase Quality/Quantity of Education, Outreach, Data Availability	\$75,522.7	\$67,818.7
EPM	\$73,094.2	\$65,865.8
SF	\$2,428.5	\$1,952.9
Improve Public's Ability to Reduce Exposure	\$49,959.0	\$42,247.7
EPM	\$49,959.0	\$42,247.7
Enhance Ability to Protect Public Health	\$33,441.6	\$23,401.0
EPM	\$12,834.5	\$11,640.6
S&T	\$20,221.3	\$11,517.3
SF	\$385.8	\$243.1
Total Workyears:	736.2	720.8

## Strategic Objective: Increase Quality/Quantity of Education, Outreach, Data Availability

### *Key Programs*

(Dollars in thousands)

	1999 Pres Bud	1999 Enacted
EMPACT	\$7,230	\$1,202
Superfund - Maximize PRP Involvement (including reforms)	\$364	\$364
Information Technology Management	\$6,744	\$4,235
Reinventing Environmental Information (REI)	\$17,704	\$12,548
SBREFA	\$703	\$760
Small Business Ombudsman	\$987	\$1,110
Center for Environmental Statistics (CEIS)	\$4,355	\$3,966
Environmental Education	\$8,478	\$7,768
GLOBE	\$1,000	\$0

## *Annual Performance Goals and Measures*

### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

**By 1999:** Provide over 100 grants to assist communities with understanding and addressing Environmental Justice issues.

#### Performance Measures:

#### Target:

EJ Community Grants

100 Grants

**Baseline:** The percentage of enforcement policy & guidance documents that are available through the Internet is based on the number of completed documents in the given year. In 1998 there were 650 facilities in SFIP which have their information available through the SFIP web-site. These documents provide information to populations suffering disproportionately from adverse health & environmental effects. In 1999 each region will be required to report on the meetings held in disproportionately disadvantaged communities & this information will provide a baseline for future years.

**ONE-STOP REPORTING**

**By 1999:** The Agency will streamline and improve the information reporting process between state partners and EPA by increasing the number of participants to the One Stop Reporting Program (for a total of 29).

**Performance Measures:****Target:**

Number of States participants in the One Stop Reporting Program.

29 States

**Baseline:** 29 State participants in 1999.

## Strategic Objective: Improve Public's Ability to Reduce Exposure

### *Key Programs*

(Dollars in thousands)

	<b>1999 Pres Bud</b>	<b>1999 Enacted</b>
Drinking Water Consumer Awareness	\$2,304	\$1,366
Pesticide Registration	\$5,460	\$5,214
Pesticide Re-registration	\$5,108	\$5,462
Toxic Release Inventory / Right-to-Know (RtK)	\$19,752	\$19,800
EMPACT	\$5,000	\$614

## *Annual Performance Goals and Measures*

**RIGHT TO KNOW REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

**By 1999:** Increase compliance with right to know reporting requirements by conducting 1,300 inspections and undertaking 200 enforcement actions.

**Performance Measures:****Target:**

Section 313 Inspections

600 Inspections

EPCRA APO Complaints

200 APO  
Complaints

**Baseline:** The number of inspections conducted annually has remained fairly consistent in recent years. This information is the basis for the 2000 projections, with adjustments made for changes in resource levels. In 2000, the enforcement program will target 50% of its inspections to priority areas. These areas will be identified in an internal guidance document which sets forth specific priorities for 2000 and forms the basis for this calculation..

### CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT REGULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

**By 1999:** EPA will partner with the states in implementation activities that will ensure all public water systems -- large, medium, and especially small -- are informed of both the requirements of the consumer confidence report regulation and implementation tools for complying with this rule.

**Performance Measures:**

**Target:**

Number of states with which EPA has an agreement on the most efficient and effective methods (e.g., training, outreach) for implementing this rule in each state	50 States
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**Baseline:** The final rule for drinking water consumer confidence reports was promulgated in August 1998.

### ENHANCING COMMUNITY RIGHT TO KNOW AND EFFICIENTLY PROCESSING INFORMATION FROM INDUSTRY

**By 1999:** Process 110,000 facility chemical release reports, publish the TRI Data Release Report and provide improved information to the public about TRI chemicals, enhancing community right to know and efficiently processing information from industry.

**Performance Measures:**

**Target:**

TRI Public Data Release	1997 Rept. Published
Form R's Processed	110,000 Forms

**Baseline:** Number of facilities reporting and number of chemicals included in TRI compared with prior year; types of public access methods and percent magnetic reporting prior year.

## Strategic Objective: Enhance Ability to Protect Public Health

### *Key Programs*

(Dollars in thousands)

	1999 Pres Bud	1999 nacted
Small, Minority, Women-Owned Business Assistance	\$2,149	\$2,064
Research: EMPACT	\$15,002	\$6,390

### *Annual Performance Goals and Measures*

#### **RESEARCH: GRANTS TO EMPACT CITIES**

**By 1999:** Complete 5-7 monitoring pilot projects in EMPACT cities, implement timely and high quality environmental monitoring technology in 5-7 EMPACT cities.

#### **Performance Measures:**

#### **Target:**

Award 5-7 grants to EMPACT cities to implement timely and high quality environmental monitoring technologies. 5-7 Grants

**Baseline:** Perfor. Baseline: Citizens in at least 75 of the USA's larger metropolitan areas are in need of access to clear, time-relevant, useful, and accurate environmental monitoring data in an on-going and sustainable manner. Development of "formal" baseline information for EPA research is currently underway.

## **EXTERNAL FACTORS**

EPA relies heavily on partnerships with states, tribes, local governments and regulated parties to protect the environment and human health. EPA's success depends on the ability of these entities to obtain access to the decision-making process as it relates to their local environment. Key management reforms are being implemented to improve the availability of environmental performance data to the public, including establishing data standards for major systems, information collection and data integration.

The Agency is promoting the implementation of

advanced technology, including the Internet, to disseminate environmental information at the local level. New technology, unanticipated complexity or magnitude of technological, partnership or environmental issues and priorities could all effect the time frame for achieving the Goal 7 objectives.

The ability of the Agency to achieve its strategic goal of expansion of American's right to environmental information is influenced by factors the Agency has only partial or no control over. The success of EPA programs depends on the voluntary cooperation and collaboration of the private sector

and the general public. The success of the Agency public outreach efforts is ultimately determined by

increased understanding and actions by the public about their environment.

## VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### Data Availability

**I**ntegrated Data for Enforcement Analysis (IDEA) provides on-line access to compliance and enforcement information for most EPA national systems. The enforcement program's use of the data, for screening, analysis and regional evaluations, provides valuable feedback to help us identify and correct problems.

Documents placed on the Internet must have management approval before public release. These document and data sources reside in EPA Headquarters and regional

offices, compliance and enforcement databases, states and other government agencies. The measurement of progress made toward our targets can be verified at any point in time. Each of our targets for this goal is based upon a number of facilities, states, etc., which can be tallied at any point in time.

This allows for ready tracking of our progress toward our final goals.

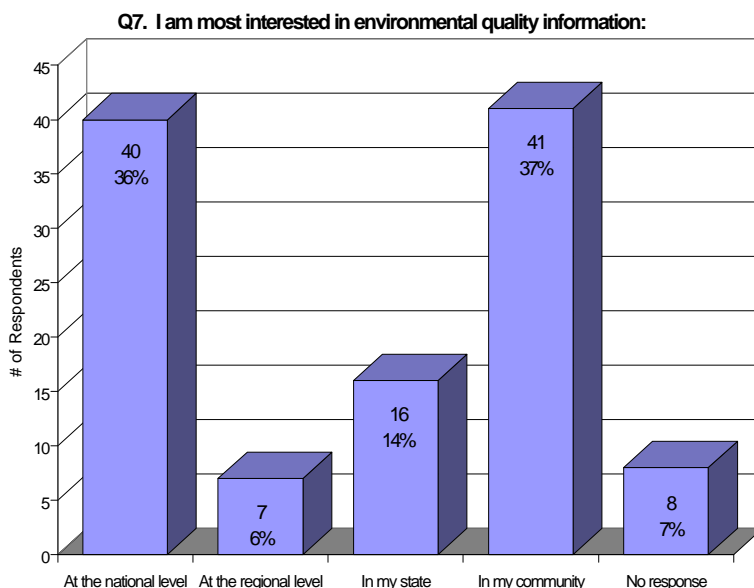
The Agency's Public Access Project, currently being implemented, is designed to make all policies, guidance and site-specific determinations available to the public through the Internet.

For instance, the data from the Sector Facility Indexing Project (SFIP), which is based on numerous reviews by EPA, states and industry, captures the most current and complete data before being released to the public. SFIP is focused on five sectors. Therefore, while the data for these specific sectors is

strong, it represents a small subset of our overall data. Additionally, a list is maintained of state participants in the One Stop Reporting Program.

### Data Enhancement

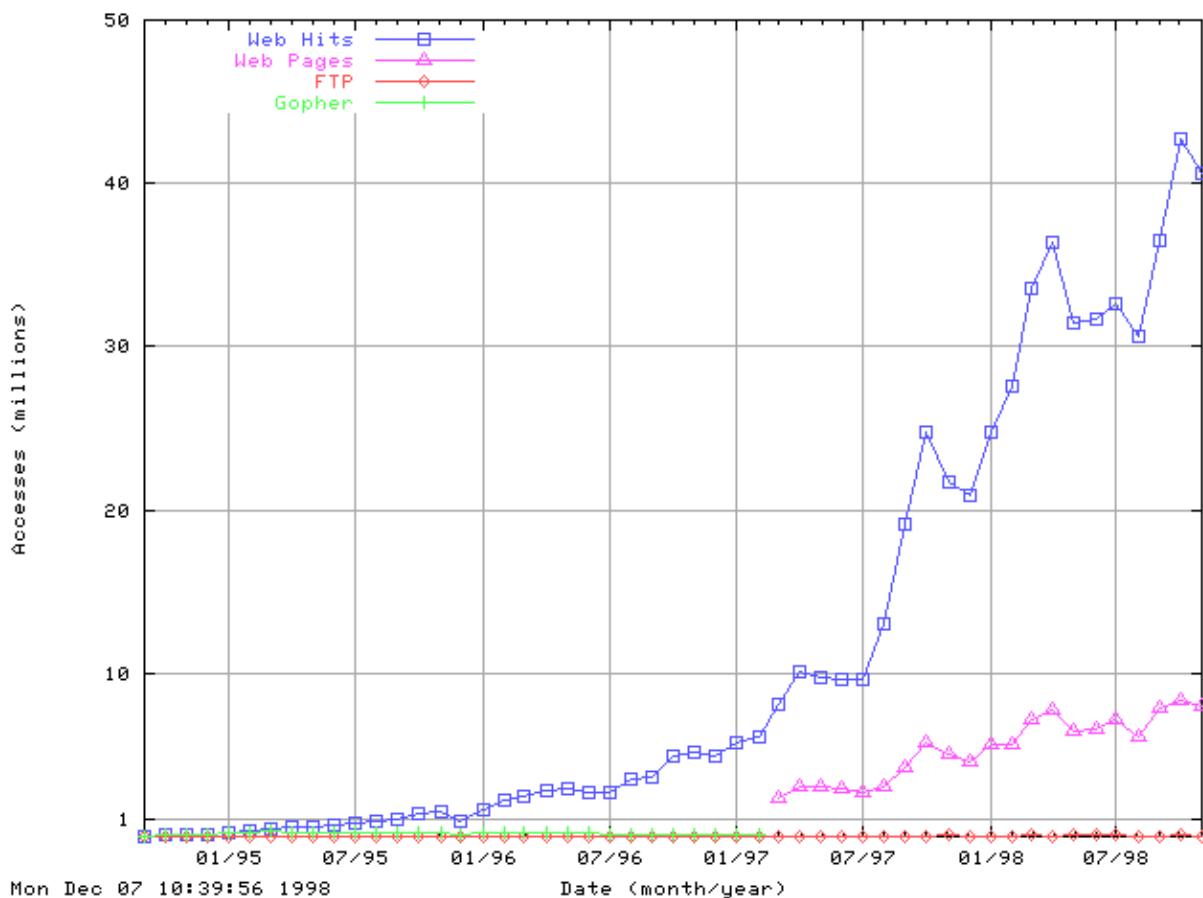
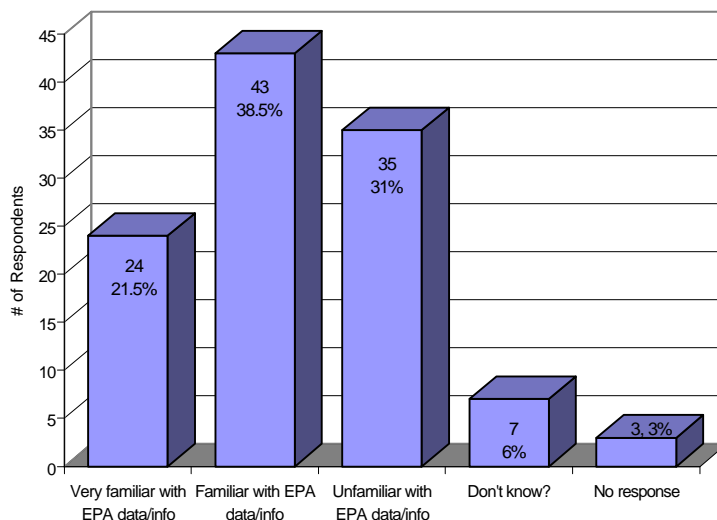
The approach to validate progress in reaching Agency performance targets will rely on the Agency's automated performance measure system to capture programmatic and customer service outcomes. The system will require periodic updating of performance data. Performance information will be collected and evaluated against targets on a quarterly basis. The collection of performance data will involve a variety of methods, such as customer service surveys. Customer service surveys will be conducted annually to measure customer service satisfaction with management and administrative services. The results of the customer service survey will be used to validate performance measures.





Verification and validation are important aspects of the right-to-know program. Most performance measures are verifiable through quantitative means. For those measures that are output-oriented, actual outputs or products can be counted or otherwise objectively verified. For example, the Toxic Release Inventory System (TRIS) tracks progress in processing the 110,000 Form Rs submitted each year. In cases such as the data quality measure, verification procedures are built into the data entry process both at the respondent level and when the data are entered into the national

Q8. Would you describe yourself as someone who is:



Above: Visits to EPA's web site

TRIS database. Edit procedures internal to the

reporting form help confirm whether data entered are internally consistent.

If this is not true, an error message is generated. Once data are entered into the national database, they are compared with those previously submitted to learn whether large increases or decreases at the largest TRI facilities have occurred. In cases where there are unusually large changes relative to previous reports submitted, facilities are contacted by staff members to verify the information. These and other similar data quality checks together serve to verify and validate data that EPA collects and disseminates.

The TRI component of the right-to-know program generates data that inform the public about what occurs in their communities. Data collected and disseminated under TRI are used by a wide variety of parties, including other Federal agencies, state and local governments, environmental, labor and community groups, and academics. In order to facilitate appropriate usage of the data, EPA publishes various analyses as part of the annual data release.

## Research

EPA has several strategies to validate and verify performance measures in the area of environmental science and technology research. Most performance measures are verifiable through quantitative means. For those measures that are output-oriented, actual outputs or products can be objectively verified. Because the major output of research is technical information, primarily in the form of reports,

software, or protocols key to the validation and verification strategies is the performance of both peer and quality assurance reviews.

Peer reviews provide assurance during the pre-planning, planning, and reporting of environmental science and research activities that the work meets peer expectations. Only those science activities and resulting information products that pass Agency peer review are addressed and published. This applies to program-level, project-level, and research outputs.

The quality of the peer review activity is monitored by EPA to ensure that peer reviews are performed consistently, according to Agency policy, and that any identified areas of concern are resolved through discussion or the implementation of corrective action.

A quality assurance system is implemented at all levels in the EPA research organization. The Agency-wide quality assurance system is a management system that provides the necessary elements to plan, implement, document, and assess the effectiveness of quality assurance and quality control activities applied to environmental programs conducted by or for EPA. This quality management system provides for identification of environmental programs for which Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) is needed, specification of the quality of the data required from environmental programs, and provision of sufficient resources to assure that an adequate level of QA/QC is performed.